United Nations A/AC.105/889/Add.16

General Assembly

Distr.: General
9 February 2015
English
Original: Arabic/English

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Questions on the definition and delimitation of outer space: replies from Member States

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

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[Original: English]

I. Introduction

1. At the fifty-third session of the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, in 2014, the Working Group on the Definition and Delimitation of Outer Space agreed to continue to address to the Governments of Member States the following questions (A/AC.105/1067, annex II, para. 15 (b)):

(a) Does your Government consider it necessary to define outer space and/or to delimit airspace and outer space, given the current level of space and aviation activities and technological development in space and aviation technologies?

(b) Does your Government consider another approach to solving this issue?

(c) Does your Government give consideration to the possibility of defining a lower limit of outer space and/or an upper limit of airspace, recognizing at the same time the possibility of enacting special international or national legislation relating to a mission carried out by an object in both airspace and outer space?

2. The present document has been prepared by the Secretariat on the basis of the replies received from Mozambique and Qatar.

II. Replies received from Member States

Mozambique

[Original: English]
[20 January 2015]

Question (a). Defining airspace and outer space is necessary, given the current level of space and aviation activities and technological development in space and aviation technologies.

Question (b). No.

Question (c). Yes.

Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[2 February 2015]

Question (a). The Government of Qatar considers it necessary to define outer space and to delimit airspace and outer space, because that would contribute to the determination of the responsibility of States and the clarification of the concept of national sovereignty. It would also avoid any ambiguity in relevant international laws and conventions. Furthermore, it would help to achieve the principle of equality of States before international law.

Question (b). Qatar suggests that there should be consultations among States in order to reach a balanced perspective on whether a delimitation of outer space is necessary.

Question (c). We believe that the optimal solution would be to conduct further studies in order to determine whether the possibility of enacting special international or national legislation relating to a mission carried out by a space object in both airspace and outer space would serve national perspectives.